

A TRIBUTE TO NEIL MCCOY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Neil McCoy of Villisca, Iowa, for being selected as the recipient of the 2015 Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame Award. Iowa State 4-H and the Iowa 4-H Foundation sponsor the 4-H Hall of Fame recognition award for volunteers and staff who have selflessly given their time and talents in promoting the Iowa 4-H program.

Mr. McCoy has been an active member within 4-H throughout his distinguished career. He served as Page County Boys 4-H President in 1967. After graduating from high school, Mr. McCoy attended Iowa State University and returned to Page County to farm with his father. That is when he began volunteering with the 4-H program. He is a Page County Honorary 4-H member and a supporter of the Iowa 4-H Foundation 400 Club.

4-H has been a long tradition in the McCoy family. Mr. McCoy's passion for 4-H is derived from his grandfather Ralph and his father Malcolm who played major roles in his devotion to 4-H. Mr. McCoy has enjoyed the many pleasures of helping his children Jeromy, Katina, and Dustin participate in 4-H activities. He says his success in 4-H comes from the support he has had from his wife, Becky, and attributes his accomplishments to her unwavering support. Their family has shared many special memories through their years of involvement in 4-H.

Mr. McCoy is an Iowan who has made a difference and makes our state proud. He has dedicated his life to helping young people in 4-H and serving his community. It is with great honor that I recognize and congratulate him today. I know my colleagues in the House join me in honoring his accomplishments. I thank him for his service and wish him and his family all the best moving forward.

LAQUITTA DEMERCHANT
COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Laquitta DeMerchant for receiving one of the World Youth Foundation's 2015 Community Impact Award thanks to her work as CEO of Fuzion Apps and dedication to her community.

Ms. DeMerchant has numerous accomplishments and shows tremendous enthusiasm for her community. She won the Women Innovation Mobile Award and the grand prize in the Department of Labor's Equal Pay App Challenge. Laquitta speaks at universities and high schools around the Houston area to increase awareness of wage gap issues and supports initiatives for working families. Laquitta also mentors young programmers and software developers in competitions throughout the nation. A member of her team at the Essence Festival YESWECODE hackathon went on to win the biggest international impact award for devel-

oping an anti-human trafficking app. We are proud of her accomplishments on behalf of our community.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Laquitta DeMerchant for receiving the Community Impact Award. We appreciate your dedication to strengthening our community.

ALLIANCE WORLD CHAMPS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Clear Creek Independent School District's (CCISD) robotics team and their robot, Empire, for being named Alliance World Champs at the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Competition Championship.

The Robonauts is made up of students of all ages from around CCISD. Together these students worked hand in hand with mentors from NASA's Johnson Space Center to build their robot, Empire. The team travelled to St. Louis where they competed against 600 other engineering teams from around the globe. The Robonauts really had to put their engineering skills to the test. In St. Louis, Empire succeeded in each competition, allowing the Robonauts to take home first place. Congratulations to all of Robonauts' team members and mentors for their victory. We are excited to see all that you accomplish in the future.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the CCISD Robonauts for being crowned the Alliance World Champs.

COMMEMORATING THE 95TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE JONES ACT**HON. DEREK KILMER**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important milestone in maritime history.

On June 5, 1920, the landmark Merchant Marine Act became law, establishing the importance of maintaining a strong domestic maritime fleet.

That law, known as the Jones Act, was the anchor that allowed the United States to launch a highly trained and skilled group of mariners who can serve to protect our nation in times of national emergency. It supports our shipyard industrial base and preserves our capacity to defend our homeland, patrol the seas, and promote American jobs.

Ninety-five years later, it's clear that the Jones Act has stood the test of time.

General Paul J. Selva, the Commander of U.S. Transportation Command, recently said, "I can stand before any group as a military leader and say without the contribution that the Jones Act brings to the support of our industry there is a direct threat to national defense, and I will not be bashful about saying it and I will not be silent."

I couldn't agree more.

General Selva doesn't stand alone in defending the Jones Act from its critics.

In fact, Congress passed one of the strongest statements of support for the Jones Act last year as part of the National Defense Authorization Act, recognizing that it promotes "a strong domestic trade maritime industry, which supports the national security and economic vitality of the United States and the efficient operation of the United States transportation system."

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to maintain the Jones Act for a new century, fight for our domestic maritime industry, and make sure that high quality, American-made vessels are being piloted by American mariners.

KATY HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL
STATE CHAMPIONS**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Katy High School Lady Tiger softball team for winning the Texas 6A State Championship. This incredible team is now the best in Texas!

With a young team, the Lady Tigers had a lot to prove. The team reached the second round of the playoffs last season and was determined to perform better this season. This resilient team certainly rose to the challenge this season. In the state tournament, the Lady Tigers ousted the powerhouses of Alvin, Brazoswood, and The Woodlands before defeating Lewisville in the championship game. We are proud of the entire team and coaching staff for their immense dedication to each other and to the sport.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Head Coach Kalum Haack and the Katy High School Lady Tigers softball team on their State Championship. Thank you for bringing the gold back home to Katy.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chair, I rise today to express my strong opposition to H.R. 2577, the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act.

This legislation is severely underfunded. Considering declining Federal Housing Administration receipts and increased Section 8 renewal costs, this year's THUD bill is funded at

\$1.5 billion below last year's level. The overall appropriations levels for all domestic discretionary programs and priorities is lower than at any point in more than a decade. That is the root cause of the problem, and until the reckless budget sequester is lifted, the priorities that Americans care about will not get the support they need. We must end sequestration now.

But the specific cuts in this bill are also a concern. H.R. 2577 imposes devastating cuts on housing priorities. It would impose a more than 10 percent cut in public housing management. It would also significantly underfund supportive housing for seniors, with that funding below last year's level and almost 10 percent below the President's request. Those cuts will have devastating impacts on Americans struggling to make ends meet.

As has been highlighted by many of my colleagues, this bill also fails to make rail infrastructure, high speed rail, and positive train control a priority. Experts say that positive train control could have prevented the tragic Amtrak train derailment north of Philadelphia, but Congress continues to shirk its obligation to adequately support it. That failure is inexcusable.

Finally, H.R. 2577 does not make the investment in auto safety oversight that the last year has proven we need. 2014 was the year

of the recall, almost doubling the previous record. We're on pace to break the record again this year. Yet, this bill funds the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration—the agency responsible for monitoring and improving auto safety—just 1 percent above last year's level. That is less than inflation. While I supported the amendment my colleague, Rep. MICHAEL BURGESS, successfully added to increase NHTSA funding by \$4 million, that is just a drop in the bucket in terms of what is needed. It is also unfortunate that this bill cuts the Office of the Secretary of Transportation—4 percent below last year's level and more than 10 percent below the President's request—in order to slightly increase NHTSA funding. We need to consider legislation like H.R. 1811, the Vehicle Safety Improvement Act, which would more than double NHTSA funding for its important work through a new \$3 fee on new vehicles. We need to ramp up resources, authority, and other support for NHTSA in order to significantly improve auto safety and save lives. I will continue to work with Mr. BURGESS and others to get that done.

These are just a handful of the overwhelming number of reasons I oppose H.R. 2577. I am glad that the President has issued a veto threat on the bill, and I will continue to work to ensure that it is never enacted.

NEEDVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STATE SOFTBALL

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Needville High School softball team for completing their season as Class 4A Texas State Runners Up.

After a history-making season, the Lady Blue Jays finished strong with a 33–8 record. They were led on and off the field by two outstanding young pitchers, Victoria Moreno and Micayla Orsak, who received great encouragement from Coach Amber Schmidt. The Lady Blue Jays demonstrated immense dedication to the sport and remained motivated throughout the championship game. They fought hard until the very end! We are extremely proud of the entire Needville High School softball team and coaching staff.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the entire Lady Blue Jays softball team on an incredible season. We look forward to seeing everything this team accomplishes.